INSS Occasional Paper 2

The Ukrainian Military: Instrument for Defense or Domestic Challenge?

Oleg Strekal November 1994



U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado

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01-11-1994		3. DATES COVERED (FIGHT- 10)
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE The Ukrainian Military: In	5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
Challenge?		5b. GRANT NUMBER
		5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER
6. AUTHOR(S) Oleg Strekal		5d. PROJECT NUMBER
	•	5e. TASK NUMBER
		5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)	8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
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12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

A Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

14. ABSTRACT

The Ukrainian army is no longer perceived to be a security challenge as it was during the first stages of the Ukraine's independence. Rather, Ukraine's leadership is primarily concerned with strengthening the army's ability to guarantee the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country.

The Ukrainian army continues to present a challenge to national interests. In addition to the army's inability to defend the Ukraine from outside military aggression, it also poses the challenge of weapons proliferation and miniaturization of the economy, and a growing dependence on Russia, both as a security partner and as a purveyor of social welfare needs. In these ways the Ukrainian military endangers the society it is meant to protect.

The Ukrainian government must recognize that while military cooperation with Russia is more lucrative than military confrontation, there are still basic needs that is must provide to the army to prevent over-reliance on its big neighbor. Political and civil control of the military must concentrate on the more acute problems, to include lawlessness, black marketeering, and collaboration with paramilitary forces. This can be accomplished by simultaneously strengthening civil control over the military, and increasing the army's reputation and prestige within society.

15. SUBJECT TERMS

Ukraine, Russia, Army, Political-Military, USAFA

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:		17. LIMITATION	18. NUMBER	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON	
		OF ABSTRACT	OF PAGES	DR. JAMES M. SMITH	
a. REPORT UNCLASSIFIED	b. ABSTRACT UNCLASSIFIED	c. THIS PAGE UNCLASSIFIED	UNCLASSIFIED UNLIMITED	36	19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code) 719-333-2717

THE UKRAINIAN MILITARY: INSTRUMENT FOR DEFENSE OR DOMESTIC CHALLENGE?

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INSS Occasional Paper 2

November 1994

USAF Institute for National Security Studies US Air Force Academy, Colorado •

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This paper is the result of a presentation at the August 1994 conference "Dimensions of European Security" held in Washington, DC, and co-sponsored by the USAF Institute for National Security Studies and the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik.

Comments pertaining to this report are invited and should be forwarded to: Director, Institute for National Security Studies, HQ USAFA/DFE, 2354 Fairchild Drive, Suite 4K25, US Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, CO 80840. Comments may also be conveyed directly to the author by calling him in Germany at 49-8178-70-0.

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FOREWORD

We are pleased to publish this second volume in the *Occasional Paper* series of the US Air Force Institute for National Security Studies (INSS). This monograph represents a departure from our norm (there being, however, only one previous edition by which to judge "norm") as we present our first non-American author, and one who prepared this paper not as part of a major INSS-sponsored research effort, but for a conference.

INSS is co-sponsored by the National Security Negotiations Division, Plans and Operations Directorate, Headquarters US Air Force (USAF/XOXI) and the Dean of the Faculty, US Air Force Academy. The primary purpose of the Institute is to promote research done within the DOD community in the fields of arms control, national security, and area studies. INSS coordinates and focuses outside thinking in various disciplines and across services to develop new ideas for USAF policy making. The Institute develops topics, selects researchers from within the military academic community, and administers sponsored research. We also host conferences and workshops which facilitate the dissemination of information to a wide range of private and government organizations. INSS is in its third year of providing valuable, cost-effective research to meet the needs of the Air Staff.

This paper highlights a potential source of unrest and instability in the second largest country in Europe, one that is nominally also one of the world's greatest nuclear powers. Mr Oleg Strekal, a Ukrainian journalist serving a fellowship in Germany, presents a timely and first-hand look at the Ukrainian military, its goals and problems, and its relations with civil society in a Soviet

successor state in the post-Cold War era. This paper is the outgrowth of a paper presented by Mr Strekal at a conference in Washington, DC, in August 1994 entitled "Dimensions of European Security." The conference was co-hosted by INSS and the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), a leading German security studies research center in Ebenhausen, Germany.

Mr Strekal points out that the re-orientation of Ukraine's foreign policy from a "Russia-restraining" approach to one of closer military cooperation with Russia has created a sense of political disorientation and demoralization within the military. Despite valid reasons for such a shift-seeking an outlet for Ukrainian military industrial goods, for example, or procuring a security partner--this could nevertheless lead to a dangerous situation wherein Ukraine's military becomes simultaneously more involved with domestic politics and less able to defend the country against military threats. Furthermore, Ukrainian history is replete with examples of misplaced trust in Russia as an ally. He enumerates several steps that could forestall that situation, to include military reforms and revised foreign policy objectives.

Our thanks to Mr Strekal and SWP for allowing us to publish this paper, and to Francesca Duncan and Kent Esbenshade for their efforts in editing the original version. We appreciate your interest in INSS and its research products. We hope we are meeting a need for this type of analysis and reflection, and we look forward to publishing these papers on a regular basis.

JEFFREY A. LARSEN, Lt Colonel, USAF

Director, Institute for National Security Studies

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since independence, Ukraine has based its military policy on two general aims. First, it wishes to diminish the threat of the army's disobedience and prevent its involvement in national political affairs--including using force against civilians. Second, it wants to develop the army as an instrument to protect the country, integrating it as a major factor in Ukraine's national security system.

The current political philosophy of the country continues to reflect these aims; however, the emphasis has changed. The army is no longer perceived to be a security challenge as it was during the first stages of Ukraine's independence. Rather, Ukraine's leadership is primarily concerned with strengthening the army's ability to guarantee the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country.

Despite the government's diminished preoccupation with the potential threat of the military to domestic security, the Ukrainian army continues to present a challenge to national interests. In addition to the army's inability to defend Ukraine from outside military aggression, it also poses the challenge of weapons proliferation and miniaturization of the economy, and of a growing dependence on Russia, both as a security partner and as a purveyor of social welfare needs. In these ways the Ukrainian military endangers the society it is meant to protect.

The military's current involvement in the political life of the country remains insignificant. The country is endangered, however, by the potential demoralization and breakdown of discipline within the army. This has already led to increased crime (not only within the army, but by servicemen against civilians), weapons smuggling to organized crime elements, and commercial

speculations involving military facilities and finances. The army is demoralized because it lacks appropriate tasks. Its mission has changed significantly since the first years following independence, from defense against potential outside (primarily Russian) aggression, to reliance on Russia as a security partner and provider of necessary social welfare goods. This change came about following the new government's accession to power in 1994. The result is a Ukrainian military that is becoming more independent from the Ukrainian state in terms of economic and business activities.

The Ukrainian government must recognize that while military cooperation with Russian is more lucrative than military confrontation, there are still basic needs that it must provide to the army to prevent over-reliance on its big neighbor. A more accurate threat assessment would lead to a reduction in the size of Ukraine's army, thereby insuring better care of the smaller force. Political and civil control of the military must concentrate on the most acute problems, to include lawlessness, black marketeering, and collaboration with paramilitary forces. This can be accomplished by simultaneously strengthening civil control over the military, and increasing the army's reputation and prestige within society.

The Ukrainian state must recognize that true sovereignty rests on economic and social pillars as well as military. Overemphasis on military independence is understandable for a new state, but must be gradually corrected. In this way Ukraine can maintain its political independence from Russia while providing a quality way of life to a military that serves to protect that independence.

The Ukrainian Military: Instrument for Defense or Domestic Challenge?

Introduction

The problems of building Ukraine's military have always attracted the attention of the country's government and its different political forces. Nevertheless, establishing the armed forces as a keystone of state-building has moved quickly beyond the political, social, and psychological aspects of Ukrainian statehood.

Ukraine has based its military policy on two general aims: diminishing the threat of the army's disobedience and preventing its involvement in internal political affairs--including using force against civilians--and developing the army as an instrument to protect the country, integrating it as a major factor of Ukraine's national security system.

The current official military policy reflects these aims; however, the emphasis has changed. The army is no longer perceived to be a security challenge as it was during the first stages of Ukraine's independence. Rather, Ukraine's leadership is primarily concerned with strengthening the army's ability to guarantee the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country.

However, despite the government's diminished preoccupation with the potential threat of the military to national security, the Ukrainian army continues to present a challenge to national interests in the following areas:

- The inability of the army to defend Ukraine from outside military aggression,
- The challenge of weapons proliferation and militarization of the economy, and
- The problem of using the army as an instrument to deepen Ukraine's dependence on Russia.

As a result of the shift in military policy and the military's challenge to national interests, the Ukrainian military endangers the society it is meant to protect.

1. The Army as a Security Pillar: Ukraine's Initial Intentions

Ukrainian officials discussed creating an independent Ukrainian army even before the state became independent. The Declaration on State Sovereignty adopted by the Parliament of the Ukrainian SSR on July 16, 1990, defined the building of the army as a major task and a natural right of the future Ukrainian independent state. The declaration was designed not to actually create an army, but rather to legitimize Ukraine's intentions to have armed forces separate from those of the Soviet Union. Moreover, by announcing the right to maintain its own army, Ukraine took a significant step toward independence from the USSR.

The military coup in Moscow in August 1991 and fears that Soviet troops on Ukraine's territory would act aggressively against the Ukrainian state forced the official leadership in Kiev to subordinate these troops to the control of Ukrainian authorities. Ukraine also announced as its own the Soviet military property on the soil of the newly independent state.

In order to diminish tensions within the army and to limit the possibility of using the military against civilians, the Ukrainian Parliament guaranteed equal rights and protection to servicemen of all nationalities. To provide effective control over the military, Ukrainian officials urged the units of the former Soviet Army to take the Ukrainian oath in January 1992.²

Establishing control over the military units helped ease rival political factions toward compromise. The idea of creating a Ukrainian army appeared to be the basis for political compromise and cooperation between the official leadership (communists-turned-nationalists) and the opposition (national-democrats). Both officials and opposition leaders agreed upon the army's role in restraining possible "Russian imperial claims" toward Ukraine. President Kravchuk and national-democratic leaders called upon the people of Ukraine never to forget the lessons of history, which confirmed that militarily weak Ukraine always gave up its independence to Russia.

Military reforms began as the state created the legal basis for the Army's existence and function. In two years, the Ukrainian Parliament adopted a series of documents on military issues, including the *Concept for Defense and Military Building in Ukraine*, the laws "On Ukraine's Defense," "On Armed Forces," "On Social and Legal Protection of Servicemen and their Families," "On Military Duty and Military Service," and more than 20 related documents.³ These reforms continued with the creation of the Ministry of Defense and a command system for the military groupings.

Ukraine's military policy also concentrated on the problems of developing military cooperation with neighboring countries. Close political and military ties within the region were supposed to create the atmosphere of mutual confidence, which would serve as the basis for the creation of a peaceful security environment for Ukraine. To this end, Ukraine tried to demonstrate that its intent to maintain its non-bloc status would not impede political-military cooperation in the region.⁴

The most intensive dialog on these issues was between Ukraine and the East European countries, especially Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. Although military cooperation with those countries did not solve Ukraine's problems of arms production and military security, the political meaning of such cooperation was significant: it confirmed that Ukraine would reorient itself to Europe and start participating in European affairs.

The countries of the Visegrad group were also interested in active bilateral relations with Ukraine.⁵ The existence of a militarily stable and predictable Ukraine diminished possible threats to Eastern Europeans along shared borders. In addition, the dependence of Eastern European militaries on Soviet-made military equipment and spare parts forced the Visegrad group to remain partners with Ukraine, which has the capability to produce this equipment and spare parts.⁶

By the summer of 1994, Ukraine had signed agreements on military cooperation with all neighboring countries, except Russia.

Since Ukraine considered Russia the major source of military troubles,⁷ the Ukrainian leadership tried to counterbalance the Russian challenge by developing military ties with the countries of the West.

Ukraine signed agreements on cooperation with the Defense Ministries of the United States, Germany, and Great Britain.⁸ The western dimension of Ukraine's military policy was part of a broader foreign policy goal of "coming back to Europe." Ties to the West, however, were established at the expense of attention to the East, particularly Russia.⁹

Fears of military attack led Ukraine to start building its own army on the second day of independence. Today this army is the second largest in Europe. In addition to the armed forces, Ukraine also keeps Border Guard troops, the National Guard, and troops of Civil Defense and special police forces, trained as paratroopers.¹⁰

The government in Kiev, as well as the political opposition, recognized existence of a direct military threat to Ukraine. Their perceptions differed only in degree of probability and scope. Government officials saw local clashes as a greater threat, primarily in:

- Political instability "in some neighboring regions";
- The existence of territorial claims (especially Russia's) in Ukraine;
- Powerful armed forces "in some states," which have enormous offensive potential; and
- Ethnic, social, and religious conflicts, which might provoke military clashes.¹¹

Opposition leaders, on the other hand, were concerned about a full-scale military threat. Parliament thus voted down the first draft of the Military Doctrine in November 1992, deeming the draft "too pacifistic" and citing several shortcomings. The document did not include a definition of "probable enemy" nor statements concerning the status of nuclear weapons or the ban on establishing foreign military bases on Ukraine's soil.

Ukraine's official Military Doctrine, adopted in October 1993, met Parliament's initial demands. Establishing foreign bases was prohibited, nuclear weapons received official status as Ukraine's property, and the definition of "probable enemy" was incorporated into the text of the Doctrine.¹³ The document defines the main principles of Ukraine's military policy in the following terms:

- War could not serve as a means for solving interstate disputes;
- Reasons for military conflicts between states could be political, territorial, ethnic, and religious;
- Ukraine would have no territorial claims to another state;
- Ukraine's probable enemy would be the state "whose consistent policy constitutes a military danger for Ukraine, leads to interference in internal matters, and encroaches on its territorial integrity or national interests"; and
- Ukraine would maintain non-block status and a keen interest in creating the pan-European security system.¹⁴

With the adoption of the Military Doctrine, the Ukrainian Parliament stated that the Ukrainian army will include 450 thousand troops, constituting 0.8 percent of the country's population. The Government announced in the beginning of 1994 that the problems of military reform in Ukraine were solved and the armed forces were capable of defending the country from any kind of aggression. 16

2. The Doubtful Defender

Under the current circumstances, the problem of the Ukrainian army as a security challenge has little to do with the probability of a military coup or with the risks of local units moving out of the military command and political control structure. On the contrary, the Ukrainian

army seems to be manageable, and the highest military officials have expressed loyalty to the Ukrainian state.¹⁷ Thus, the army's challenge lies in quite another direction: the armed forces in Ukraine are ill-prepared to protect the country effectively. This shortcoming includes military-organizational, political-military, ideological, and moral aspects.

Military-Organizational Aspects

In the fall of 1993, the Parliamentary Commission on Defense and National Security publicly expressed its fears concerning the defensive capabilities of Ukraine's army. The head of the Parliamentary Commission, Valentyn Lemish, used several arguments in this regard:

- Military units do not receive new military applications and equipment, while existing techniques and weapons become nonusable (the condition of military jets, for instance, constitutes a mere 4 percent readiness level);
- The scarcity of oil and gasoline postponed military exercises throughout Ukraine;¹⁹
- The lack of training fields for air defense and air forces makes these troops incapable of fighting;
- The military budget does not include the costs of ordering new weaponry, expenses for research, nor the development of a new system of arms;²⁰ and
- Some steps intended to restructure the Army (such as reorganization of the Kiev Military District, the unification of the Air Force and Air Defense Forces, etc.) hurt the defense capability of the military.²¹

Ukraine still deploys troops in the manner it inherited from the Soviet Union, concentrating its most advanced troops along the western borders of the country. Yet even though Ukraine did not change this former structure, it recognized that its possible enemy would be to the east of its borders. This is especially true of air defense; however, no sufficient air defense system exists along the Ukrainian-Russian border. Moreover, the Ukrainian Air Force continues to use an "identification friend or foe" system similar to that of the Russian military, making it extremely difficult, in fact, to determine friend from foe. The absence of any system to protect the border with Russia (especially weak is the protection of the Azov and Black Seas) means the absence of a comprehensive early-warning system against a possible attack from the East. 4

The Military Doctrine of Ukraine states that the armed forces have the task of defending against any state or coalition of states, air and space strikes, and from naval invasions.²⁵ If Ukrainian troops are to fight an undefined enemy, the tasks listed in the Military Doctrine represent a major problem in training the armed forces. Moreover, this doctrine leads to the squandering of financial and material resources for the unrealistic task of developing responses to any imaginable threat.²⁶

The source of military danger to Ukraine is well known. The definition of the probable enemy in the Military Doctrine, as well as in numerous statements of Ukrainian politicians, make it clear that Russia could pose the greatest military threat to Ukraine. Nevertheless, Ukrainian military units are not trained to defend against an attack launched by a specific aggressor.²⁷

The concept of a Ukrainian armed force does not take into account that a stand-off with the Russian army would mean dealing with a military that possesses nuclear, chemical, biological, and high-tech weapons. For example, the Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation does not exclude Russia's right for a preventive nuclear strike. On the other hand, Russian military strategy in the "near abroad" is based on using rapid reaction forces (such as airborne troops). Ukraine, however, lacks mobile units for an adequate response to such an attack.

Positioning its forces is also a problem, for Ukraine finds itself surrounded by Russian military bases. The Russian 14th Army is stationed in Pridnestrovie. The Russian-controlled Black Sea Fleet (about 12,000 servicemen) is based in Crimea. Russian troops are very active in Caucasus and are concentrating in Krasnodarsky Kraj of the Russian Federation. Finally, the Belarussian military (in addition to 25, 000 Russian troops stationed in Belarus) has become a Russian ally, since Belarus signed the Collective Security Treaty with Russia, agreeing to the foreign policy of the Russian Federation. In case of an escalation of a Ukrainian-Russian conflict, Ukraine has to expect military strikes from every possible direction, while lacking the capacity to respond to them properly.

Finally, because the majority of Ukraine's officers corps are ethnic Russians, such an army might hesitate to fight against any kind of "Russian imperialism."

Political-Military Aspects

Not only the national interests of Ukraine, but military reform itself, have suffered from the politics of that reform. Disputes over the

division of the Black Sea Fleet (BSF), nuclear disarmament, and attitudes toward military cooperation with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) all undermine efforts to reform the military.

The partitioning of the BSF and Ukrainian concessions to Russia made in this regard demonstrated the weakness of Kiev's position vis-à-vis Moscow. The softening of Ukrainian claims on the BSF (from the whole fleet, to 50 percent, to 10-15 percent, to attempts to sell the fleet as payment for debts to Russia) only hardened Russia's policies toward Ukraine. Moreover, under pressure from Russian military officials, Ukraine agreed to allow Russia to establish a base for its fleet in Crimea. By so doing, Ukrainian leadership ignored its own ban on positioning foreign troops on Ukraine's soil, which is the basic principle of the Ukrainian Military Doctrine. The result was a political blow to the central Ukrainian government in Crimea, and local politicians and public leaders blamed Ukrainian authorities for giving in to the "Russian Glory."

The controversies in Ukrainian policy over nuclear disarmament endangered national security in two major ways. First, Ukraine's intentions to improve operational control over ballistic missiles inadvertently caused a direct military counter-threat to it. Responding to these intentions, Russian military officials incorporated into the text of the Russian Military Doctrine a paragraph that defined attempts to interfere with, or to damage the command and control systems of, Russian strategic troops located abroad as a direct military threat to Russian Federation.³² The second aspect of the nuclear issue deals with the reaction of the international community. Speculations over strategic weapons postponed Ukraine's integration into the world community, while Western leaders

considered just such an integration the most effective pillar for Ukraine's national security.³³

Changing attitudes of Ukrainian leadership toward military cooperation within the CIS also tend to damage the country's political image and national interests. During the first two years of independence, Ukraine was extremely cautious about any cooperation within the military structure of the CIS because of fears that such cooperation would lead to the subordination of the Ukrainian army under Russian-dominated CIS structures. Ukraine viewed remaining a non-bloc country as a basic guarantee against any move toward instituting its military into the Commonwealth. The Ministry of Defense decided at that time to create an "independent army," remaining outside the influence of any policies of the CIS or Russia.³⁴

Such caution, however, had some disadvantages. It ignored the prospect that military cooperation between Russia and CIS would be a decisive factor in diminishing a possible military threat from the Russian Federation. In fact, the numerous attempts of the Ukrainian leadership to escape from the orbit of Russian influence in political, economic, and military terms caused general political tensions between the two countries and raised mutual suspicions about each side's military goals.

Implementing the policy of neutrality proved to have dual logic. Ukrainian officials, while rejecting any possibility of joining a Russian-led military union, made it clear that they would join a Western military coalition in case of military aggression.³⁵ Moreover, Ukrainian leaders expressed their intention to see Ukraine among NATO members in the years to come and tried to sell to the West the vision of Ukraine as a "belt of military stability against any turbulence in the East."

This dual logic fueled Russian fears of being isolated from Europe. As for the West, such logic contributed to the image of Ukrainian policy as something unpredictable and unstable. Because of controversies concerning CIS and non-bloc status, Ukraine found itself between two security structures: NATO and the CIS.³⁷ Indeed, the country appeared to be an "undesirable guest" for both of these structures.

Ideological and Moral Aspects

One of the Ukrainian leadership's first decisions on military issues was to de-politicize the army. The institution of political commissars was dissolved and political activity within the military was prohibited. Servicemen were ordered to postpone party membership until the end of their military service. Nevertheless, it became obvious that denying party membership and political activity in the army would not solve the problem of the army's low "combat spirit" and the problem of poor morale of soldiers and officers.³⁸

To increase the patriotism of the army and to strengthen the "feeling of mission" among the servicemen, the Social-Psychological Service was established within the Ministry of Defense. The basic task for this Service could be defined as the "Ukrainization of the Ukrainian army." This concept meant replacing Soviet military tradition with Ukrainian military history and tradition, as well as language.³⁹

However, the process of the army's Ukrainization, while absolutely necessary, was too drastic and one-sided. The patriotic education of servicemen dwelled exclusively on the history of Ukrainian Cossacks and on the struggle of the Ukrainian Rebel Army during World

War II. Completely ignored was the history of the Soviet Army, the previous staple of officer education. The pressure to learn the Ukrainian language quickly alienated, at least psychologically, Russian-speaking officers.

This rapid Ukrainization contributed, paradoxically, to the negative sentiments within the army. The morale of the Ukrainian officers was unbelievably low. According to a poll taken by the Union of Ukrainian Officers in the spring of 1993, 10 percent of the officers were ready to betray Ukraine at any moment. Thirty-three percent stated that they took the Ukrainian oath because they had homes in Ukraine; 27 percent explained that the main reason for serving in the Ukrainian army was the stability of Ukraine. The poll also demonstrated that approximately 40 percent of high-ranking military officials supported the idea of a common CIS army. In general, low morale accounts for lack of discipline in the army, a high level of crime and corruption, and unwillingness of servicemen to develop their professional skills.

The social status of Ukrainian servicemen also remains dismally low. As Minister of Defense General Radetzky stated, the social status of the officers is lower than that of coal miners and bus drivers. The low social prestige of military service is the major reason young people avoid serving. Questioning its officer corps, the Ministry of Defense has discovered that 93 percent of Ukrainian officers are not satisfied with their living standards, 88 percent are aware of the lack of social acceptance, and 57 percent expressed dissatisfaction with military service. 43

Military service has become increasingly unattractive to young conscripts. Every year, the number of deserters from the army amounts to several thousand. The number of those who escape recruitment is even higher. According to figures compiled by the Ukrainian Institute for

Youth Problems, 60 percent of the conscripts who ignored the obligation to join the military said the lack of basic human rights in the military was the primary reason for not joining.

3. Ukrainian Military And Weapons Proliferation

The West is primarily concerned with the nuclear aspects of Ukraine's problems with weapons proliferation. The trilateral agreement signed in Moscow in January 1994 by the United States, Russia, and Ukraine was seen as a significant Western success in disarming Ukraine of nuclear weapons. The Western strategy toward Ukrainian weapons was based on traditional non-proliferation approaches:

- Elaborating a common Western policy toward the issue, using the framework of interstate diplomacy and the network of international organizations, especially the European Union and NATO;
- Putting political pressure on Ukraine, including the threat of international isolation;
- Targeting the nuclear missiles of NATO members on Ukraine's nuclear assets as well as making it clear to Ukrainian officials that their country could face the danger of nuclear deterrence;⁴⁴ and
- Implementing intensive intelligence activities within Ukraine.

Of course, there were some new elements in the counterproliferation policies:

- Attempts to create a friendly security environment and to diminish
 Ukraine's fears of direct military threat⁴⁵ and
- Financial assistance, through the Nunn-Lugar program, for safe dismantling of nuclear warheads and missiles, for retraining engineers and technicians from the military-industrial complex, and for establishing more effective export control in Ukraine.⁴⁶

Ukraine's bilateral relations with individual Western countries in the field of nuclear disarmament proved more effective than its relations with international organizations, particularly NATO. Central to these relations is the problem of non-proliferation payments. Ukraine recognized that it is more effective to ask for payments from individual states rather than from international institutions.

These non-proliferation activities have resulted in the withdrawal of some nuclear warheads from Ukraine. Although these withdrawals eased the West's major concerns, serious proliferation-related problems remain:

• Disappointed with Western security guarantees, Ukraine's leadership still favors the principle of self-defense as a major security guarantee for the country. The new Ukrainian leadership is skeptical about the West's willingness to incorporate Ukraine into Western collective security structures. Officials in Kiev are pessimistic about NATO's reforms and the prospect of NATO's expansion.⁴⁷ On the other hand, it was Leonid Kuchma, Ukraine's current president, who persuaded Parliament not to speed up the nuclear disarmament of Ukraine.

- Western assistance is considered insignificant; it covers only a
 few percent of Ukrainian needs. Ukraine needs \$6 billion to
 improve the safety of nuclear reactors, and the West has promised
 only \$200 million. The same disproportion is true for dismantling
 nuclear missiles, deactivating liquid missile fuel, and retraining
 personnel.
- The West is perceived as Ukraine's competitor in the militaryindustrial field, which is not conducive to equal partnership. In
 Ukraine, the principle of self-defense along with the principle of
 self-survival means the Ukrainian government will attempt to get
 hard currency by any appropriate means.
- Finally, Western sensitivity over nuclear issues convinced
 Ukraine's leaders that they could influence the West by using the
 nuclear lever. Ukraine's exploitation of "the power of the gun"
 complicated the disarmament processes in the country. However,
 Western behavior in the field of arms control and
 counterproliferation--such as deliveries of weapons to Greece and
 Turkey and keeping US nuclear forces in Europe as a deterrent to
 non-nuclear threats⁴⁸ --has fueled Ukrainian desires to act more
 assertively in weapons-related areas.

These problems lead to the possibility of continued weapons proliferation. The context for this proliferation lies in the functioning of the Ukrainian military-industrial complex and the intent of the military leadership to reach self-sufficiency by providing the military with essential weapons. Politically, this issue is significant because Ukraine still tries to deter Russia by military means in order to protect and strengthen its own independence.

4. Ukraine's Military-Industrial Complex

Ukraine inherited about 30 percent of the Soviet military industry, which included between 50 and 60 percent of all Ukrainian enterprises. Since Ukraine's independence, its leaders have intended to reorient this huge military-industrial potential toward the production of civil goods. 49 However, the leadership's attitude toward conversion of military industry started to change at the beginning of 1993. Several factors accounted for this shift. The country's economic decline endangered the very existence of the military industry, which has several million employees. The deficit of hard currency pressed Ukrainian officials to look for products that would be competitive on the world market, and the military-industrial complex was considered the best provider of such goods. Finally, the acute need to produce weapons for the Ukrainian army created an "anti-conversion" process within the military industry.

In 1993, about 40 percent of the state budget supported the military-industrial complex. At the same time, the cost of social programs constituted only 20 percent of budget spending.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, during the last months of the year, almost all programs for the conversion of the military industry were postponed because the industry renewed its efforts to produce weapons.⁵¹ At the same time, Ukraine elaborated its program to produce firearms and other kinds of weapons. One indication was Ukrainian Minister of Defense Vitaly Radetzky's November 1993 visit to enterprises of the military-industrial complex. During this trip, General Radetzky stated that Ukraine should create its own military-industrial complex, capable of providing the armed forces with all kinds of weapons and equipment.⁵² Another indication was that research in the field of

rocket and cosmic weapons was underway at Ukraine's scientific centers in Kharkov and Dnepropetrovsk.⁵³

The costs of revitalizing industry have led to increasing hyperinflation in Ukraine, strengthening of state control over industry, and increasing deficit of commercial products on Ukraine's internal market. Moreover, Ukraine's economy faces additional risks, including:

- A possible arms race in the region,
- The proliferation of high tech weapons production, and
- The proliferation of arms at the local level.

As for the arms race, Ukraine intends to maintain the second largest army in Europe and rejects disarmament. The Ukrainian military is looking for a modern weapons system with space-based elements, missiles, and high-precision weaponry. The Department on Disarmament in the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs proposed to enhance strategic deterrence using Ukrainian-made intercontinental missiles with advanced conventional warheads.⁵⁴ To not destroy ICBM silos, to arm strategic bombers with advanced missiles, and to keep part of its nuclear weapons are issues for discussion within the Ukrainian government. These ideas are strongly supported by national-democratic and nationalist political opposition parties, as well as by the general public.

The goal of keeping powerful and well-armed forces could provoke an arms race with Russia and would undermine the process of disarmament in Europe. Until now, Ukraine has partly respected several international agreements such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty, and Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). But mitigating against these

agreements are the principles of balance of power incorporated into both the Ukrainian and Russian Military Doctrines.

5. Arms Exports

The second risk related to the militarization of the economy concerns arms export and weapons proliferation. Strong competition in the world's weapons market (Ukraine faces competition with Russia as well as the West) has forced Ukraine to look into exporting arms to politically unstable or even aggressive regimes. Ukraine has established its own network for arms export and, in so doing, does not fully recognize international rules and bans. Moreover, the Ukrainian military, while not knowing who would use the weapons, traded conventional arms on the black market and signed contracts with commercial firms. ⁵⁵

Ukraine's contract with Iran is a case in point. The first contracts on weapons deliveries to Iran, signed in the middle of 1992 and causing negative reaction in the West (particularly in the US), proved that Ukraine did not take into consideration the political consequences of such attempts. So As for civil cooperation with Iran, Ukrainian government officials and their Iranian counterparts have discussed the prospect for cooperation in the field of nuclear energy, specifically the possibility of sending Ukrainian atomic specialists to Iran.

Another possible area of Ukrainian contribution to weapons proliferation lies within the CIS. While political significance was the greatest motivator in military cooperation with Eastern Europe, contacts with the CIS are aimed primarily at the creation and production of Ukrainian weapons.

While Ukraine inherited a powerful military-industrial complex, employing 40 percent of its working population, the majority of the enterprises did not produce the final products. Ukraine also played a small part in scientific efforts aimed at creating new weapons systems in the military industry of the former USSR. For example, the level of Ukraine's participation in creating and modernizing an air defense system was five percent; in producing military jets (MIG) three percent, (10 percent for Sukhoi fighters); in producing artillery systems, zero percent; and in producing tanks, 20 percent.⁵⁷ However, Ukraine was, and remains, the leader in missile-related technology, especially guidance systems, navigation electronics for combat vessels and submarines, and radar for military jets.

Thus, without cooperation in the framework of the CIS, the problem of providing the Ukrainian army with modern weapons appeared insoluble. For this reason, General Vitali Radetzky, Ukraine's Minister of Defense, defined several spheres of military cooperation with CIS countries:

- Creating production of a weapons system,
- · Using military test-fields for joint testing of new weapons,
- Modernizing weapons,
- · Exchanging technical documentation, and
- Transporting military equipment and technology outside of customs regulations. 58

Such cooperation could well mean the restoration of the militaryindustrial complex of the former USSR. However, while the Soviet Union
was previously the only exporter of arms, the CIS would include several

exporters in the former Soviet Republic. For Ukraine, whose leadership has emphasized military cooperation with non-Russian states of the Former Soviet Union, the variety of exporters increases the risk of high-tech proliferation. Since Ukraine has signed agreements with Kazahkstan and Uzbekistan on the common development of high technology in the field of space exploration, this risk has become a reality.⁵⁹

6. Weapons Smuggling

The third risk, represented by developments in the Ukrainian army and military industry, is the proliferation of weapons and explosive materials in the country as well as the illegal export of weapons to "hot spots" on the territory of the FSU.⁶⁰

Each year Ukrainian officials confiscate between 10 and 12 thousand weapons from Ukrainian citizens. These weapons may come from outside of the republic or are stolen from militia men, non-departmental guards, or others. One source is the army, whose loosened discipline, unsatisfactory provision, and weak protection of weapons stockpiles lead to the increased levels of arms in society. Consequently, the number of attacks on sentries and ammunition depots--for the purpose of capturing submachine guns and explosives--has increased drastically. In most cases, the thieves are people involved in guarding the weapons. For instance, all crimes of this type in the Black Sea Fleet were perpetrated by sentries and warrant officers.

Commercial and defense organizations have taken the opportunity to grow richer. Some cases of illegal exports involve small companies organizing the transportation of large lots of weapons. This activity is aimed at delivering weapons to conflict areas within Azerbaijan and

Georgia, and warring parties themselves often directly order these weapons. Increasingly, too, officials from defense plants receive tempting propositions to sell secret products manufactured exclusively on orders of the Ministry of Defense. On the local level, new enterprises producing light arms and ammunition attract growing attention from criminals and black marketers.

The absence of control over this massive weaponry market leads to the rise of internal terrorism. The republic is flooded with a wave of attacks against representatives of governmental institutions and threats to executives, people's deputies, and even the President himself.

Investigations into these attacks reveal that, in most cases, the violence is not politically motivated. However, cases in which the violence is politically provoked also have appeared. Members of the Ukrainian paramilitary study procedures designed to protect weapons at military locations then try to corrupt soldiers and officers who are in charge of safekeeping these weapons. The weapons, should they be stolen by paramilitaries, could endanger the peaceful balance in some Ukrainian regions, especially in Crimea.

To sum up, Ukraine's challenges related to weapons proliferation are likely to be the following:

- First, Ukraine could be a state which possesses and develops conventional weapons of mass destruction and the means for their delivery in order to maintain some kind of balance of power with Russia.
- Second, to improve its financial situation, Ukraine could actively participate in arms export and the export of dual- and missilerelated technology

 Third, Ukraine is faced with the question of the technical safety of nuclear warheads. Officials in Kiev accused Russia of ignoring its duty to provide the appropriate technical service to the warheads. Because Ukraine lacks expertise to maintain the warheads properly, Russia could always use the nuclear risks as a lever in any disputes with Ukraine.

These potential challenges are not fatal, and the Western community could respond to them in a number of ways. Of course, these activities should be combined with traditional Western efforts in the fields of diplomacy, political consultations, and implementing international agreements. Western approaches could include:

- Facilitating defense spending reductions through the Partnership for Peace (PFP) framework. These attempts should be reciprocated by the Western side because of Ukraine's fears of being disarmed at a time when others keep their weapons.⁶¹
- Assisting Ukraine's government in its export control efforts. The
 first steps in this dimension would probably include establishing
 an appropriate balance between secret and unclassified
 information. Until now, any information on arms exports remains
 top secret. Ukraine's government threatens to charge with
 criminal irresponsibility anybody who reveals figures concerning
 Ukraine's arms export.
- Involving Ukraine in the spheres of military technology as well as
 projects for space exploration. As for the latter, both NASA and
 the European Space Agency have taken the first steps to evaluate
 technical cooperation with Ukraine. Military cooperation,

however, remains underdeveloped. Ukrainian attempts to raise this question through the NACC and through bilateral consultations with Western militaries have been unsuccessful. The PFP, which concentrates primarily on cooperative military projects with Eastern Europe, also fails to provide a better perspective on this issue.

- Participating more actively (through consultations, financial aid, economic and technological assistance) in converting Ukraine's military industry. To overcome reluctance to cooperate, it is necessary to fight stereotypes shared by Ukrainian leaders that the West has an enormous advantage because of the decline in the Ukrainian military industry.⁶²
- Facilitating the creation of institutions of civil society which could bring independent expertise to bear on Ukraine's military policies.
 In fact, there are no independent agencies in the country for such purposes. Society's control over the military activities of the government does not really exist.

It remains to be seen, however, whether the West would be capable of solving Ukrainian-Russian security dilemmas or, at least, of diminishing Ukraine's fears of losing its independence to Russia. So far, these fears have been the most serious reasons for Ukraine's "love of the bomb."

7. Military Ties With Russia: Influencing The Political Environment

During three years of independence, Ukraine has tried several different approaches to orienting the relations of its armed forces with Russia.

At the first stages of its independence, Ukraine used its army to distance itself from Russia and strengthen its independent statehood vis-à-vis Russia. Later on, Ukrainian leadership considered the army a major object of Russian blackmail. This was especially true with respect to nuclear weapons, since Russia did not carry out its duties regarding technical service of and maintaining nuclear warheads. Under the current circumstances, the army has become an instrument for establishing closer ties with Russia. In this regard, the real challenge to the Ukrainian Army is the possibility of unequal political cooperation, with Ukraine making significant political concessions to Russia.

Ukraine, in fact, has made several overtures toward Russia. The country has rejected its previous reluctance to cooperate within the CIS. The Ukrainian Minister of Defense agreed to take part in the meetings of the CIS Council of Ministers of Defense and accepted the possibility of Ukraine's participation in the activities of the CIS Staff on military cooperation. Later on, Ukraine agreed to joint Ukrainian-Russian efforts to protect the external borders of the CIS. Quite a number of officials from the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense were receptive to the idea of creating a common military space on CIS territory. These officials included even General Konstanin Morozov, the former Ukrainian Minister of Defense, who, in opposition to military ties with Russia, once said that

the Ukrainian army was going to use Russian satellites for the purposes of military intelligence.⁶⁶

The most powerful force arguing for more intensive cooperation with Russia is the military-industrial lobby within Ukraine's executive and legislative branches. Since the beginning of 1993, the representatives of Ukrainian and Russian military industries have cooperated successfully on numerous projects.⁶⁷ In the first half of 1994, both countries were working on a basic bilateral agreement concerning cooperation in the military-industrial field.

Today, high ranking Ukrainian politicians wish to cooperate closely with Russia, including military cooperation. As a matter of fact, key positions in the Ukrainian government and Parliament are currently occupied by representatives of the Communist, Socialist, and Agrarian parties, whose programs are aimed at re-establishing previous ties with Russia. The July 1994 election of President Leonid Kuchma, whose electoral program was based primarily on reinforcing Ukraine-Russian cooperation, made the pro-Russian drive the core element of Ukraine's official policies. President Kuchma first intends to restore economic ties with Russia in the military-industrial field, whose industries are better prepared and have greater capabilities for cooperation than the civil sector.

Several questions remain open in this regard. What would be the extent of Ukrainian-Russian military cooperation? Would it include peacekeeping in the CIS, joint military exercises, joint use of some military units (the Black Sea Fleet, for instance⁶⁹)? Would this cooperation include strategic aspects, with Ukraine taking part in developing a strategic early warning system and in modernizing ballistic missiles for the Russian army?

Not unexpectedly, political and military liaisons would sooner or later create the problem of collective security on the territory of the former Soviet Union. So far, Ukraine has agreed to a CIS security system primarily because of the "non-collectivism" of such a system. In the past, collective security in the CIS has been seen as Russia-dominated system, in which every participant implements Russian orders. But the new Ukrainian leadership interprets the term "domination" in a way which has little to do with earlier fears of losing Ukrainian independence to Russia. One reason is that the economic and social decline as well as the collapse of the idea of Ukrainian statehood has forced Ukrainian authorities to look elsewhere for help--from anybody.

This assistance could bring some advantages to the Ukrainian army in terms of meeting military threats to Ukraine. It is well known, for instance, that nationalistic political forces in Romania have claimed parts of Ukraine's territory. Moreover, the island Semen in the Black Sea, which belongs to Ukraine, has become the subject of Romania's official territorial claims. In this situation, Romania could represent a security challenge to Ukraine. However, considering Ukrainian plans to cooperate militarily with Russia, Russia could broaden the role of the 14th army in Pridnestrovye to include restraining possible Romanian aggressiveness toward Ukraine. Moreover, if the Black Sea Fleet were put under joint Ukrainian-Russian command at the disposal of the two countries, this Fleet could well serve as another deterrent to Romanian territorial claims.

Finally, close military ties with Russia could also lead to softening the Ukrainian-Russian military stand-off in Crimea as well as solving the problem of protecting the Ukrainian-Russian state border.⁷⁴

The need to look for external assistance represents the most acute problem of Ukrainian military history--the problem of a reliable ally. The Pereyaslav Treaty of 1654, which was the first concession of Ukraine's independence to Russia, was signed by hetman Bohdan Khmelnytzky to gain an ally to rid Ukraine of Polish occupation. Today the urgent need still exists for an economic and financial, military-industrial, and security ally who would share (even only symbolically) the burdens of Ukrainian state-building. The problem is, however, whether the historical pattern of Ukraine-Russian relations would repeat itself in the modern situation, i.e., whether Ukraine, choosing Russia as an ally, would later on find this ally as a master.

Conclusion

The potential threat of the former Soviet Army used to be described in terms of the armed forces involving themselves in politics and military officials participating in coups. Although there is some evidence of the army's political activity in Ukraine, the military's involvement in the political life of the country remains insignificant. Modern Ukraine does not face the challenge of the army moving out of political control. Rather, the country is endangered by the possibility of the army's demoralization and by the decline of discipline within the military. So far, the results speak for themselves:

- Increasing crimes within the army and crimes against civilians committed by servicemen,
- Weapons delivered to criminals and paramilitary forces, and
- Commercial speculations with military facilities and finances.

The main reasons for the high degree of the army's demoralization have been the lack of appropriate tasks for the military and the strict independence of the army on the controversies in Ukrainian political affairs.

During the first two years of the country's independence, the armed forces were oriented toward a possible military threat from Russia. Because of this plan, Ukraine maintained at the end of 1993 about 700 thousand men under arms. But it was incapable of providing social protection, appropriate living standards, and modern weapons for these men. Moreover, these underpaid and underarmed servicemen were, in many cases, supposed to fight against the country of their ancestors.

The new Ukrainian political leadership which came into power in the first half of 1994 intends to replace the "Russia-restraining" approach with military cooperation with the Russian Federation. These shifts in policies toward Russia have led to remodeling the functions of Ukraine's army. Such political inconsistency has created a feeling of uselessness among the servicemen. If the political disorientation of the army were to continue, the processes of demoralization and the disintegration of military units would transform the armed forces into an uncontrolled institution (both politically and militarily), which would endanger the day-to-day life of Ukrainian society while not carrying out the duty to defend the country from a military attack. As of today, the army is becoming more and more independent from the Ukrainian state in terms of economic and business activities, while significant amounts of military property have been sold to private persons and firms without any payments to the state budget.

To prevent such a transformation, several urgent steps are necessary. First, the Ukrainian leadership must elaborate a realistic perception of the threats to the country, including elimination of the former overestimates of the Russian military challenge. The concept of military cooperation with Russia should be treated as more profitable for Ukraine than military competition with the Russian Federation. As for contacts between the two militaries, the Ukrainian military could learn military strategy, tactics, and defense planning from Russian military specialists. Russian military institutes and academies could be used to educate Ukrainian officers.

Second, the Ukrainian army must be reduced in size to a level where it would be capable of meeting military challenges to Ukraine and still cover the basic needs of its people, particularly social guarantees. A comprehensive state program for retraining dismissed officers is needed. Without such a program, real reforms within the military are not likely to begin. Even before starting the process of troop reduction, the Ukrainian leadership must view Ukraine's independence from other than a military perspective. In Ukraine's situation, the protection of the state's independence lies in the economic and social realm, as well as the military realm. Although the military pillar of Ukraine's independence is important, its significance should not be overestimated. This tendency is the result of Soviet military psychology, habits of a Ukrainian military leadership, and nationalistic concepts of the Ukrainian military superpower. There is a need to gradually eliminate these false perceptions.

Third, political and civil control over the military should be concentrated on diminishing the most acute challenges, such as weapons proliferation, violent crime, black marketing, and collaboration with paramilitaries. Those problems not only hurt the defense capabilities of the army, but they also contribute to forming a negative image of the army in Ukrainian society and abroad. In fact, the country should strengthen

civil control over the military, facilitating the integration of the armed forces into society. Consequently, military reforms should be aimed first at increasing the army's reputation and prestige within society.

Finally, while facilitating military cooperation with Russia, the Ukrainian leadership should keep Ukrainian national interests protected as well as separate from Russian interests. In this regard, it is unlikely that Ukraine should have any military interests in Central Asia, although Russia may ask for more active Ukrainian involvement there. If that involvement occurs, Ukrainian civil and military officials should beware of transforming Ukrainian-Russian military cooperation into an instrument for expanding Ukraine's political dependence on its military collaborator.

ENDNOTES

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- See the interview with General Kostyantyn Morozov in Kyivska Pravda, November 27, 1992, page 3
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³⁹ Ukraine's Minister of Defense General Radetzky expressed his concerns on the military education in Ukraine and the moral sentiments in the army during the meetings with the representatives of Ukraine's military-education system in July 1994. *Ukrainian Radio World Service*, July 9, 1994

⁴⁰ The results of the poll ere published in *Golos Ukrainy*, April 22, 1993, page

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